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Indianhead Column
Independence Day – Curfew Policy
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Subhead: Good conduct brings Curfew Policy Change

Warriors, Independence Day marks an important anniversary in our nation's history. On July 4, 1776, the Second Continental Congress unanimously adopted the Declaration of Independence and announced the original 13 American colonies' separation from Great Britain. Every Independence Day reminds us of the freedoms we have because of the sacrifices of U.S. Servicemembers, both past and present.

This Independence Day, U.S. Servicemembers in Korea will also enjoy the freedom that comes from today's lifting of the USFK peninsula-wide curfew. The curfew was adopted initially for force protection and readiness reasons. The specific hours of curfew have been adjusted up or down periodically, based on available information about potential threats. In fact, Korea is an extremely safe place to live and raise your Family. However, over the last few years, many have come to believe that the curfew was intended to prevent Servicemembers from engaging in off-post misconduct during specific off-duty hours. That is not so. The vast majority of Warrior Country troops, civilians and Family members do what is right every day. And, we want to thank you because your actions help strengthen one of the world's greatest alliances.

The lifting of the curfew is an indication of the good faith and trust the commander of USFK has in our ability to exercise good judgment, personal responsibility and self-discipline. It is also another important step toward normalizing tours of duty here in Korea. Since January of this year, the 2nd Infantry Division has consciously given you opportunities to demonstrate your responsibility through programs such as the R.E.A.L. Warrior campaign, monthly Warrior Family Days, and Warrior University's "Degree at Three." As a result, we have made great strides in decreasing alcohol-related incidents and misconduct while significantly increasing responsible behavior such as university enrollment. You are doing great! That's why we enthusiastically support this policy change, and you deserve it!

Now that the curfew has been lifted, I trust that you will continue to exercise good judgment, that you will look out for your battle buddies, and that you remain ambassadors for the United States at all times during your tour here in the Republic of Korea.

You should also keep in mind that as key members of this Alliance, we must maintain our readiness at all times. You will be expected to be present for duty, on time, to standard - ready and able to perform your duties. It is hard to do that if you stay out all night partying. Needless to say, abusers of the privilege will be held accountable and curfew may be reinstated at anytime. Let's not let the few ruin it for the many and help police each other from violating the trust we have earned.

As you celebrate Independence Day and all the freedoms we enjoy, remember the sacrifices that have been made in our honor and the very essential role you as a Soldier play in the security of our nation and our host country. So, enjoy some well-deserved time off with friends and Family and have a safe and responsible Fourth of July. Teresa and I wish you and your loved ones an Independence Day that is "Second to None!"